

## **This Week in 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division History**

**20-26 May**

by Ceilia Stratton

(for complete text, see 4ID website <http://www.hood.army.mil/4ID/>)

### **WWI**

**1918** The Division suffered its first casualties of WWI and they occurred at sea. On 23 May Companies A and B of the 58<sup>th</sup> Infantry who were traveling to France on the troop ship *Moldavia* were torpedoed by a German submarine. The attack was at 0240 as the ship was approaching England. Fifty-six men were lost as a torpedo struck the compartment where the men were sleeping. All other personnel were rescued from life boats and shortly after the *Moldavia* sank.

### **WWII**

**1944** The Division began its movement to ports on the English coast under complete security restrictions. The mission of the Division was explained—to be the lead assault force on a French beach in Normandy. Models of the assault beach were studied; gas proof clothing was issued; waterproofing of vehicles and equipment accomplished.

**1945** The Division continued to maintain law and order and to guard installations within the zone of occupation. Orientation and training programs were carried out in conjunction with occupation duties.

### **Vietnam**

**1967** “Nine Days in May” battles along the Cambodian border continued into the first part of this week. Private First Class Leslie Allen Bellrichard of Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry was acting as a fire team leader on 20 May when they came under a massive enemy attack. For his actions that day, PFC Bellrichard was awarded the Medal of Honor. Also on 20 May Staff Sergeant Frankie Z. Molnar, Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry was a squad leader in the Company when a massive enemy night attack occurred against their defensive perimeter. For his actions during that attack S/SGT Molnar was awarded the Medal of Honor. (See complete citations at the 4ID Museum or at the 4ID website.)

**1968** The Division begins Operation MATHEWS on 24 May. The operation deployed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade and two brigades of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division under the command of the 4ID ADC toward the Ben Het Special Forces Camp in Kontum Province in response to the movement of major NVA units towards the camp.

**1969** All brigades were conducting operations characterized by reconnaissance in force, search and clear, search and destroy, cordon and search, ambush and short range patrol

operations using platoon and company sized elements. Additionally, there were road and pipeline security missions over the entire AO.

**1970** The Division continued to adapt as its combat units returned from their foray into Cambodia. Short one brigade, operating from a still new headquarters (Camp Radcliff), and having recently surrendered primary responsibility for the defense of Pleiku Province to South Vietnamese forces as part of the ongoing Vietnamization effort, the Division resumed Operation Hines.

## **OIF**

**2003** Several cities and towns in the Division AO began holding local elections, characterized as “somewhat” democratic. Slow mail delivery continued to be a problem for anxious families awaiting word on their Soldiers. Soldiers at a checkpoint near Kirkuk seized \$80-\$100 Million worth of non-minted gold bars and detained three Iraqi’s.